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U.S. PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

Attorney Docket No. ZAA-10204/03

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Zaher Al-Sheikh

Serial No.: 09/694,530 Group Art Unit: 2621

Filing Date: October 23, 2000 Examiner: Duy M. Dang

For: METHOD FOR VERIFYING THE IDENTITY OF A PASSENGER

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DECLARATION OF PRIOR INVENTION IN THE UNITED STATES TO OVERCOME A CITED PATENT UNDER 37 CFR 1.131

I, Zaher Al-Sheikh, hereby declare as follows:

1. I am the inventor of the invention disclosed in the above-identified application for patent. The above-identified application for patent claims priority of a provisional patent application Serial No. 60/060,817 filed October 1, 1997, of which I am also the sole inventor.

2. This declaration is to establish completion of the invention being claimed in the above-referenced application in the United States at a date prior to January 6, 1997, which is the effective date of U.S. Patent 5,920,053 that was cited in the non-final Office Action mailed July 2, 2003.

3. The months leading to my reduction to practice were devoted to literature searching and experimentation. During this time, I regularly discussed my efforts with my wife, Huda Al-Sheikh, and my brother-in-law, Ghadir Yaldo.

4. After having reduced my invention to practice, my wife was involved in an accident that temporarily prevented my pursuit of patent protection for my invention. In late March or early April 1997, I contacted a patent attorney, Remy VanOphem, who practices in the building where my wife was undergoing physical therapy. Mr. VanOphem undertook a patent search and subsequently provided me with a patentability opinion. In August 1997, I

commissioned a follow-up patent search from the law firm of Gifford, Krass. Based on the results of the second search, provisional patent application Serial No. 60/060,817 was filed on October 1, 1997.

5. Based on the above considerations, I do not believe that U.S. Patent 5,920,053 filed on January 6, 1997 preceded my actual reduction to practice of the invention in this application.

6. This declaration is submitted prior to final rejection and in response to rejections relying on U.S. Patent 5,920,053 in the Office Action mailed July 2, 2003.

7. In support of this declaration attached hereto as factual evidence is a supporting declaration by Ghadir Yaldo confirming verbal disclosures as to reduction to practice of my invention.

8. I declare that all statements made herein of my knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing thereon.

Zaher Al-Sheikh

Dated: 9-30,03

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DECLARATION OF GHADIR YALDO

I, Ghadir Yaldo, residing at 3140 Sylvan Drive, Sterling Heights, Michigan 48310, hereby make the following statements based on my personal knowledge:

1. I have read U.S. provisional patent application Serial No. 60/060,817 entitled "Method for Verifying the Identity of a Passenger," naming as the sole inventor my brother-in-law, Zaher Al-Sheikh.

2. Zaher Al-Sheikh described to me prior to January 1997 an invention substantially as described in U.S. provisional application 60/060,817. His disclosure of the invention to me took place at 33252 Breckenridge Drive, Sterling Heights, Michigan 48310.

3. I declare that all statements made herein of my knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing thereon.

Ghadir Yaldo

Dated: 9-30-03

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METHOD FOR VERIFYING THE IDENTITY OF A PASSENGER

Field of the Invention

Security at airports, train and bus stations as well as other central transportation sites is a concern for all who utilize conveyances such as airplanes, trains and buses. Various systems are utilized to verify the identity of a passenger prior to boarding such a conveyance. For example, the identity of the passenger is typically verified at the time the ticket is purchased, at the time the boarding pass is issued or during passenger check-in. Because the identity of a passenger is not typically verified after the purchase of the ticket or after the issuance of the boarding pass, there is an opportunity for a ticket purchased by one passenger to be utilized by another passenger. Thus, there remains a need for a simple system which will permit the verification of the identity of a passenger at the time of boarding the particular conveyance.

Summary of the Present Invention

The present invention satisfies this need by providing a method for verifying the identity of passenger at the time of boarding. The method includes the steps of initially verifying the identity of a passenger prior to the time of boarding. For example, the identity of the passenger may be verified at the travel agent or airline counter when the ticket is purchased and travel arrangements are made. Alternately, the identity of the passenger may be verified upon check-in at the transportation site. Next, a photographic image of the passenger who purchased the ticket is taken with a camera capable of generating and outputting an electronic image. A variety of digital cameras are available which enable an electronic image

to taken of an individual and which output an electronic image. The electronic image is then associated with information on the travel arrangements of the passenger, such as flight number, train number, seat assignment, departure time and the like.

The electronic image is input to a printer which prints a human-cognizable image of the passenger onto a boarding pass which is depicted in Figure 1. Preferably, the information on the travel arrangements of the passenger is also printed onto the boarding pass at this time, although the electronic image may be printed onto a boarding pass already containing such information. Several human-cognizable images may be printed on the boarding pass, thus enabling an image to be printed on tickets having several separable portions.

The passenger then proceeds to the boarding site with the boarding pass. At the time of boarding or upon arrival at the boarding site, the human-cognizable image on the boarding pass is compared with the passenger presenting the boarding pass to ensure that the passenger who purchased the ticket is the same passenger who is boarding the conveyance.

In a preferred embodiment, the electronic image of the passenger is associated with the travel arrangements of the passenger and stored in a centralized database.

In an alternative embodiment, the camera taking the image of the passenger may directly apply the image to the boarding pass by using either photosensitive

material in at least a portion of the boarding pass in a Polaroid-type system or by directly transferring the electronic image created by a digital camera to the boarding pass.

Claims

1. A method for verifying the identity of passenger at the time of boarding including the steps of:

verifying the identity of a passenger prior to the time of boarding;

taking a photographic image of the passenger with a camera capable of generating an electronic image output;

associating the electronic image output with information on the travel arrangements of the passenger;

printing a human-cognizable image of the passenger along with information on the travel arrangements of the passenger onto a boarding pass; and

comparing the human-cognizable image on the boarding pass with the passenger presenting the boarding pass at the time of boarding.

2. The method of claim 1 further including the step of storing the electronic image output along with information on the travel arrangements of the passenger.

3. A boarding pass for a conveyance, the boarding pass of the type comprising a document listing a passenger's name and destination, wherein the improvement comprises:

a photographic image of the passenger displayed on the boarding pass.

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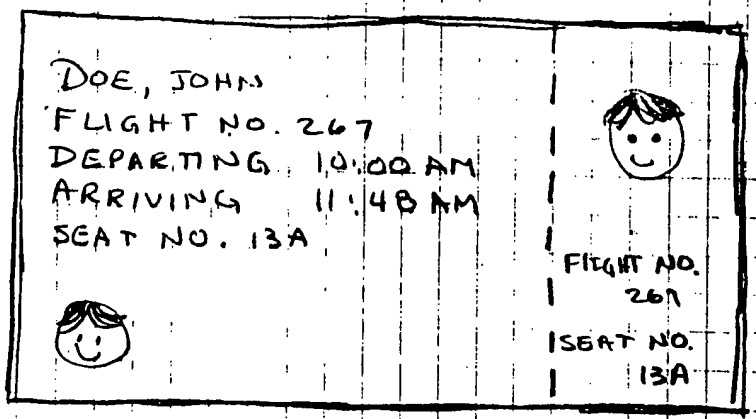

Figure 1